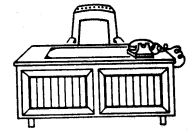


Our Lord Jesus Christ, King of the Universe

November 25, 2018



From the Desk of
Fr. Romanus

Dear Parishioners,

The Solemnity of Christ the King:

This Sunday is the Solemnity of Christ the King, a celebration of Jesus' messianic leadership. The celebration is a great way to end the liturgical year and welcome a new liturgical season that begins with the first Sunday of Advent. Pope Pius XI instituted this Solemnity in 1925, in an encyclical entitled *Quas Primas*. In the encyclical, the Pope attributed the denial of the Kingship of Christ to the rise of secularism.

The rise of dictatorship in Europe influenced the institution of the solemnity, coupled with numerous challenges to the Church's power and influence. Originally, the Church celebrated this feast on the last Sunday in October, but later moved it to the last Sunday of Ordinary Time in the revised liturgical calendar of 1969.

Many people in our society see kingship as archaic, undemocratic and suspect due to the ever-present danger of tyranny. The absence of the kind of checks and balances inherent in a democratic system makes the concept of kingship uncomfortable. When power is concentrated on one individual, there is the danger of dictatorship. Those concerned about the dangers of human kingship should realize that the reign of God is different.

Unlike human royalty, spiced with honor, prestige, extravagance and pomposity, the kingship of Christ is rooted in simplicity and humility. It is ironic that Jesus was crowned king by the very people who rejected him as king (Matthew 27:29). In the prelude to his crucifixion, Jesus received a crown not made of gold, diamond and ruby, but of thorns. Likewise, a staff not made of precious metals and stones, but of reed. As king, Jesus is the champion of our fight against evil, and the model of Christian leadership. His earthly reign is the reign of love, justice and peace. The fullness of his reign lies beyond human experience as portrayed in Scripture passages, especially the apocalyptic writings.

In today's gospel, Pilate questions Jesus about his claims to kingship. The kind of treatment Jesus received in the hands of his own people compelled Pilate to ask, "Are you the King of the Jews?" Assuming he must have done something horrific, Pilate inquired further, "What have you done?" He wondered what could have led to the loss of his kingly status. Obviously, Jesus did nothing to deserve the treatment he received. Ironically, his claim to being the Messiah/King was the reason for his prosecution.

To allay Pilate's concern about the loss of dignity and honor a king deserves Jesus states that his kingship is not here. If his kingship were here, his soldiers would fight to prevent the kind of humiliation he was experiencing at the hands of his people. The question is - Do we treat Jesus with the dignity and respect he deserves? Do we respect his presence in the Holy Eucharist? How does receiving communion while shewing gum show him respect and honor? How does engaging in any kind of conversation with communion in your mouth show respect and honor?

Daniel's vision in our first reading underscores the heavenly kingship of Christ. Those who fail to recognize him on earth will be sorry when they appear before his throne to receive judgment. Like an undercover boss, Jesus is present to us concealed in many forms, in the Eucharist, in the poor and the suffering, and so on. Through faith, we are able to see him revealed and knowing that the fullness of his revelation will be at the end of time.

Christ the King is also the feast day of our parish. Hence, I wish all our parishioners a happy feast day.

Have a great week. Fr. Romanus